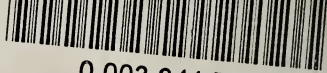


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NEED AND AVAILABILITY
OF

The Writing and Spelling Reform.

A LECTURE.

BY WILLIAM T. COGGESHALL.

*Delivered before the Ohio Phonetic Association, at
Antioch College, Yellow Springs, O.,
September 11th, 1857.*

Our popular educational systems deny to our language a sound basis of representation, and consequently support perplexities and confusions which retard the progress of learning in our schools and colleges—obstruct the general diffusion of knowledge, and, in our places of business detract from the service and pleasure of needful occupations.

The Phonetic movement has a single object: It aims to furnish a reliable guide to orthography and pronunciation: yet, perhaps, no Reform ever met graver frowns or more learned sneers. No practical movement was ever more significantly prejudiced by the cant of erudition or the pretension of reverence—a couple of royal cousins in the realms of "Humbug" which have sustained many delusions and retarded the progress of many truths.

Phonotypy and Phonography propose to accomplish for the learner, the reader, and the writer precisely what the Railway accomplishes for the traveler. Considering that the great

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effort of ingenuity now-a-days, and the great purpose of capital, and the great design of energy are to accomplish the utmost in the briefest space of time, there is expressive and expansive force in the adage—"Time is Money."

Appealing to the Spirit of the Age, the plans and purposes of those who form Phonetic Societies, and publish Phonotypic books and Phonographic Magazines, are a practical application of that adage to a preëminently important branch of labor, which, directly associated with all other advancement—relied upon, indeed, for the record of all other progress—is just as complicated, just as difficult of acquisition, just as slow and tiresome a process as it was a hundred years ago:—aye, in most respects, as it has been since its first discovery.

WHAT IS PHONOTYPY?

It has been well defined, a rational system of spelling words as they are pronounced, by employing an enlarged Alphabet, containing a separate letter for each sound, by which means the drudgery of learning to spell is entirely dispensed with, and learning to read is accomplished in one-fourth of the time required in the common way.

That the precise mode of representing sounds has been devised—that the characters now employed in Phonotypic books and newspapers are the best that could be collected, I am not prepared to discuss. My topic is the Need and Availability of a Spelling Reform. I advocate the propriety of Phonetic representation, and this, when clearly explained, is so apparent, that it seems to me every man ought to recognize it.

It is a common principle of policy that if we



impose too much work on our servants, we may expect a portion, if not all of it, poorly done. Division of labor is one of the secrets of that management by which, in immense manufactories, small profits, on separate articles, ensure rich reward to the capitalist. Letters are our servants for the representation of ideas, for the record of thoughts. It need not be argued that confusion must arise if they have complicated duties. They *do* have complicated duties, and "confusion worse confounded" *does* arise. *That*, every man, woman, and child knows, who ever learned a-b-c's—who ever danced under the exhilaration of tough twigs well applied, for bad spelling:—that, right well, does every teacher know, who has had his patience tried in vain efforts to instruct some inattentive youth, that exceptions to rules, not rules, are what he must observe if he would master orthography. In the English language there are, according to approved analysis, forty-three elementary sounds. To represent these sounds we have an Alphabet composed of twenty-six letters. It is plain, therefore, that some letters must do double, some triple duty, and some even have more laborious service. For instance, the character known as "a," in different combinations, represents five sounds, "e" six, "i" five, "o" seven, "u" seven. Now, the learner must not only acquaint himself with what "a," "e," "i," "o," and "u," are, but what they *may* be. What is the result? A few men and women whose occupations require daily exercise of the pen, spell most words according to the dictionary, while the "rest of mankind" spell words as they are pronounced; and business letters, and love letters (quietly be it spoken) have as varied or-

thography as the nature of the business, or the intensity of the love. The drilling and pounding such persons have groaned under in spelling classes—the time that dragged heavily for teachers, the wear and tear of patience they endured, were fruitless.

Let me recapitulate a few of the nice calculations that have been made on the perplexities and inconsistencies of our Alphabet, and its employment. There are 20 different letters and combinations of letters for representing the sound *a*; 12 for *c*; 23 for *e*; 7 for *o*; and 24 for *u*. So that when a child wishes to spell a word having the sound of *a* in it, there are 19 chances against its spelling that word according to Webster; or in spelling one with the sound of *u* in it, the child must *guess* one of the twenty-four different ways of representing that sound! The sum of the ways in which each of the twenty-six letters is used in different senses, together with the sum of the ways in which two or more taken together are used in different senses, is *six hundred and fifty-eight*. Now the learning 658 different ways, which are only so many complex and arbitrary substitutes for as great a number of single characters, that might more easily be learned, is comparatively nothing; it is the learning and memorizing required to know which of these substitutes should be used to represent each particular sound in every syllable in every one of the words of our language.

Suppose the pupil to have learned and *remembered* all the different ways of spelling each of the 43 sounds of the language, 658 in number—is he any better off than before? Not in the least, as to his ability to spell, with any *certainty* of correctness, any word that he has not memo-



rized. There being at least 401 different ways to represent our vowel sounds, and perhaps more than 100,000 words in our language, counting all their declinations, comparisons, conjugations and all other inflections, a person, to spell every word correctly, must know every individual way of representing these vowel sounds, and which individual way is proper for every individual syllable of every individual word.

If we take into mind that the 43 ways of using the letters of the Phonetic Alphabet, divided by 43—the number of the letters—gives one, and that the 658 ways of using the old letters, divided by 26, the number of letters, gives 25 and 8 over, we make it obvious, at once, that it is over 25 times more difficult to learn to spell and read correctly in the common than in the new method.

Again, an economy of about twelve and a half percent is saved by dispensing with all silent and double letters.

If it be good policy in these progressive times, for boys and girls to cudgel their brains, and have their backs cudgelled in turn, out of reverence to what has been, and what is, (*wrong*,) for the sake of learning arbitrary distinctions, which perplex, and confuse, and retard; then, Phonotypy is chief among “the bugs that do hum,” but, to adopt a concrete form of argument, otherwise,—otherwise; entirely otherwise.

“Figures don’t lie,” it is said; but figures would lie outrageously, if they were employed as letters are. Suppose that for the system of enumeration, now in vogue, we had only five characters to represent all the quantities between 1 and 100: and that, sometimes, 6 were twice 3; sometimes, 4 times 3; and, sometimes, half of 3;

and these differences of value did not depend on clearly defined relations, but were arrived at by experienced guessing. What jolly cheating there would be! what a reliable science mathematics! what fine fun schoolmasters would have teaching arithmetic! how bank clerks would be tried! how shop men and shop maids would covet all the christian graces in order to keep their tempers even! and, how often the hard-working man would be grossly defrauded! Such a state of things could not continue. Reform would be universally demanded. Letters lie now, just as figures would if they had the same complicated relations to each other. The need of a Spelling Reform is just as clear as would be the Enumeration Reform. Figures have closer acquaintance with our pockets than letters, it is true, but if we count the time worse than wasted in our schools, while pupils strive to fix in their memories the varied offices of Alphabetic signs, and then estimate the value of the time consumed in tedious exercise of the knowledge gained, we shall discover that letters have a nearer relation to "profit and loss" than we supposed. This relation is rendered still nearer when we understand that the construction of our language upon a Phonetic basis would save one-fourth of the time required to comprehend its written and printed use, and at least four-fifths of the time consumed in that use.

If it is needful, at the expense of heavy capital, perseverent energy, and imminent hazard, to condense the journey of a week into one day, why is it not needful to preserve for useful information or instruction not less than one school hour in every six, now squandered in learning what, according to common acknowledgement,

"*won't stay learnt.*" I offer no disrespect to any individual, when I declare that not one person in ten out of the educated circles of city or country communities, can analyze the orthography of one-half the words in common use. The pronunciation of a word is no guide to its spelling—the spelling of a word is no index to its pronunciation.

I may compliment my auditors upon their intelligence, but I'll venture to affirm that the shrewdest, sharpest one among them cannot pronounce the sound of four letters which I shall speak. They occur in the following line, deriving importance from association:—

"Though the tough cough, and hiccough plough me through."

Now, who can tell how "O-U-G-H" is pronounced. Six times did I repeat the sound, yet who can inform me, whether, *independently*, it is *o—uf—auf—up—ow*, or, *oo*.

Perhaps all of my auditors have attended Spelling Schools,—some of them may have presided on those interesting occasions, when youthful ingenuity and juvenile memory are required to be as keen and active, as in any other intellectual arena—but not one can answer what *a-t* spells. Is it (at) *ate*, or *at*? If, as they say in Spelling Schools, the whole class is put down, we will try another test. It shall be a simple one:—What does *i-t* spell? Is it (it) *ite*, or *it*? The best schoolmaster does not know.

He must understand the association of the letters, or the meaning of the word. He can spell *it*, or *at*, or *though*—that is, he can tell what letters are understood to represent these sounds, because by diligent practice and extended observation he has learned so much from pictures which meet his eye; yet, tho' he be an A.

B., or a D. D., or an L. L. D., he cannot declare how *o-u-g-h*, or *a-t*, or *i-t*, isolated, is pronounced. Verily, this is strange, but "'tis true 'tis pity, and pity 'tis 'tis true."

A striking specimen of the absence of practical philosophy in our orthography is afforded in two small words, in pronouncing which, not one of the letters with which they are written is sounded. How do you spell the word expressing the affirmative in *viva voce* voting?—thus—*a-y-e*, (I). Again, take the word by which the female sheep is known—*e-w-e*, (yo).

If any persons should trace such illustrations of the need of Spelling Reform through the varied offices which the twenty-six letters of our alphabet are required to perform, he would not be surprised that many men and women carry through life, school-room recollections very suggestive of rods and ferules—of dunce blocks and fool's caps—of cramped fingers and aching heads;—recollections, which whenever orthography is talked about, induce nervous shrugging—which sometimes elicit sighs, but often curses. No one who has not reflected upon this subject, is aware of the number of rules required to guide the student of English in learning the language. Dr. Flügel, in his English Grammar for Germans, gives sixty-five pages of rules for the pronunciation of the different letters of the alphabet; fifteen pages of accent rules, and seventeen pages of orthographic rules. Dr. Heussi in a similar work, devotes one hundred and twenty-one octavo pages to the same subject; and Mr. Hirst in his Grammar devotes fifty-six quarto pages to rules for reconciling the incongruities of the English language.

Among the 80,000 words which our Diction-

aries authorize us to employ, there are 201 polynims—words differently pronounced without change of orthography, embracing 406 different pronunciations; 364 homonyms, or words spelled in 728 different ways—36 words in 108 different ways, 3 each—4 words spelled in 16 different ways, 4 each, and one word spelled five different ways—in all, 405 words spelled in 857 ways—besides there are 146 words spelled by different lexicographers in more than two different ways.

As an editor, I have been accustomed for twelve years to examine MSS. I have published many contributions from literary men, Preachers, Doctors, Lawyers, Schoolmasters, Merchants, and Mechanics, and I speak advisedly when I say, that none of them write invariably as the printer should spell, heterotypically. Printers often consult the Dictionary for the orthography of words. Editors MSS. must often be corrected by compositors. For twelve years I earned my bread with my pen, publishing daily, on an average, at least one column of matter in a newspaper of medium size; and yet I would not dare to wager largely that every word in this Lecture is written according to the accepted orthography. I do not pretend to extraordinary dullness—nor unexampled forgetfulness;—and if a man who writes constantly cannot have confidence in his spelling, what presumption, what injustice, to demand that the man who writes but once a month, or once a year, shall always write "*fulfillment*," and similar words with the *ll* in the right syllable—or *perseverant*, and words of corresponding orthography, with an *a* instead of an *e* in the last syllable. Whenever I hear a managing

"fogie" sneer at "learning made easy," and declaim for the "pursuit of knowledge under difficulties," I desire to inspect his MSS., and if I have an opportunity I probably discover that the difficulty lying in the way of his pursuit of a knowledge of orthography, was so enormous he has not entirely overcome it.

The natural exponent of thought is vocal utterance. Written language is a device employed to record that to which the voice has given form and substance, or to symbol what the mind wishes to be uttered. It must be, therefore, of the first importance that words should infallibly indicate sounds, just as important as that musical notation should infallibly indicate tones and semi-tones.

How frequently—how provokingly—how ridiculously our mongrel orthography violates this common-sense principle. Phonetic Reform is but the instrument of its protection—the medium of the universal application of that principle.

If ever there was a language for which an infallible guide to pronunciation was peculiarly required, it is the English language. Phonotypy furnishes that guide just as surely as the magnetic needle furnishes a guide to the north. The language Americans speak is Saxon and Celtic, Greek and Roman, French and German, Spanish and Italian, and what else the lively imagination may conceive. We have many modern phrases with foreign pronunciation, and their orthography is quite as reliable an index to their sound, as are a politician's professions, prior to an election, to his actions when he shall get into office.

We must not reject the "material aid" foreign

tongues contribute to our own: its strength is increased—its copiousness is enhanced—its melody is extended and sweetened; but let us receive the rich gifts which are conferred upon us in such a manner that they will bless, rather than embarrass and perplex us. Fusion is popular in politics. While we compromise to combine political elements that they may be rendered available, why should we not so fuse language that, written, it will be a rational representative—a sensible symbol—a reliable record.

The propriety of Phonetic representation is not a modern idea. In the century that preceded the progressive one in which our eventful lot is cast, learned and influential men exposed the inconsistencies of the common orthography, on Phonetic principles.

Dr. Franklin says in one of his letters to a friend:—"You need not be at all concerned about your bad spelling; for in my opinion, what is called bad spelling, is generally the best, as generally conforming to the sound of the letters. To give you an instance:—A gentleman received a letter in which were these words, 'Not finding Brown at *hom*, I delivered your *messeg* to his *yf*.' This gentleman called his wife to help him read it; between them they picked out all but the *yf*, which they could not understand. The lady proposed calling her chambermaid, 'because Betty,' says she, 'has the best knack of reading bad spelling of any one I know.' Betty came, and was surprised that neither of them could tell what *yf* was. 'Why,' says she, '*y-f* spells *wife*—what else can it spell?' And, indeed, it is much better, as well as a shorter method than *doubleyou-i-f-e*, which, in reality, spells *double-you I fee*."

That Betty, following the plain dictates of natural reason, of common logic, was a Reformer. Her master and mistress were conservative, and represent very happily a class of persons who now strive against, or will not encourage, Phonetic Spelling, because it is an innovation.—Their arguments—shallow pleas for the “let-it-alone-policy” which opposes all progress—mere excuses for inattention and indolence, remind me of the *philosophy* of a servant girl, who, on being ordered by her mistress, to wipe the dust from the choice furniture of a parlor, into which broad sunlight had not for many days been permitted to penetrate, replied:—

“La! mistress, keep the shutters closed and it’s well enough. It’s the naughty sun that comes in and shows the dust!”

To the unthinking it may appear a vandal spirit which would change the typography of all the books in the world. The worthy ones would bear the change—the repose of others in antiquarian libraries, as representatives of the “old time gone,” the world could bear. But, says the literary objector, with reverential awe, would you disguise, to the men and women of to-day, the language Shakspeare and Milton, Bacon and Chalmers, Goldsmith and Scott wrote—in which the works of Bryant and Irving, of Cooper and Edwards are printed? Not a whit, my dear sir. The history of printing is not without internal evidence of change.*

*The following is a specimen of the Lord’s Prayer in the style in use six hundred years ago:—

“Fader ure in heune, haleweide beothe thi ueuae, cumen thi kuneriche the wille bootee idon in heune and in erthe,—Ure euerych drave breid gi fous thilk darve. And vorzif ure dettes, as vi vorziven ure dettours. And lede us nought into temptation, bot delyver ous from uvel. Amen.

The men and women of to-day can read Shakspeare's works Phonetically printed more readily than they can read the old style in which King James' translation of the Bible was first published, or in which Chaucer's Poems were first given to the world. In ancient editions of the New Testament, we find a sentence in which the Apostle Paul declares himself to be the "*rascal* of the Lord Jesus Christ." In the editions of the present time we learn that he was the "*servant* of the Lord." Whoever wishes to become acquainted with the curiosities of literature, can find, in its history, many departures from the first acceptation of words, quite as striking as the change that has taken place between *rascal* and *servant*.

The gentleman inclined to literature, who opposes Phonotypy because he has convinced himself that it would destroy the history of the derivation of words, (which to the scholar is partially preserved in the present orthography) to be consistent, should insist upon the restoration of obsolete phrases, and upon the restoration of the original meanings of words. He forgets that practical results—that time-saving processes—that knowledge-extending systems are of more consequence than scholarly fancies, or classical allusions. Though the friends of progress regret the loss of such a man's polished conversation and learned counsel, they must go forward without him, as went forward the far-seeing Engineers who have opened Canals and Railways through broad mountains, in spite of the warnings of a learned Priest, named Acosta, who in 1588 gave it as his opinion that human power should not cut through the mountains and

iron rocks which can stand the fury of the raging seas, declaring that it would appear to him very just that we should fear the vengeance of Heaven for attempting to improve that which the Creator in His Almighty will and providence had ordained from the beginning of the world.

Let the practical man consider that Shakspeare was quite well satisfied with the post-chaise in which he could journey, upon extraordinary occasions at the rate of ten miles an hour—that Rev. Jonathan Edwards when he traveled in New England supposed himself making very swift progress, if between two Sabbaths he could reach a parish three hundred miles distant from his own.

Dramatists need not now be the faded denizens of a crowded city. They may construct the scenes which shall bring them fame and money, in quiet homes remote from business, dust, and din; and upon the Railways, they may glide in an hour more miles than Shakspeare could travel between sunrise and sunset.

Preachers may now bless their children at tea on Saturday evening—hold family service at bedtime in a household a hundred miles distant, and on Sunday morning preach to a congregation thus remote from their own; but the preacher of 1857 can no more swiftly prepare the MSS. for his sermons than could Chalmers or Edwards. The author of 1857 is just as many days, weeks, or months, recording the thoughts which animate a Poem, or which shall be spoken by the actors in a Drama, as was Milton or Shakspeare.

Not that, even with the old system, books enough are not printed now-a-days, but that

much of the time occupied in making good books (and of them we can never have too many) might be economized. Men need not spend less time or less labor thinking—but when they have great thoughts they may sooner put them where others can enjoy them, and consequently secure enlarged opportunity for thinking. The real authors could do so much, that authorlings might stand so poor a chance they would be glad to earn their bread with hand-work, instead of starving on head-work.

In 1817, the intervals of communication between Cincinnati and New Orleans were measured by the half-year—from Cincinnati to Louisville, by the fortnight—from Louisville to Pittsburg, by the fortnight four times doubled. Now the business man may breakfast in Cincinnati, dine in Louisville, and return to Cincinnati for supper—he may breakfast in Louisville and sup in Pittsburg, yet the Steamboat or Railroad Agent of 1857 has just the same labor—consumes just the same time in keeping a record of any merchandise he transports, as did the keel-boat captain of 1817.

Take a livelier illustration: The telegraphic operator who hears the surf beat on Nova Scotia's coast, may hear also the click which is answered on the instant in a thousand towns and cities, north, south, east, and west in our broad union; but the news-gatherer, at whose wish the telegraph is employed, can no sooner prepare his despatch than could the commander of valiant forces, in the stormy times of the War for Independence, who was only able to report his movements to the head-quarters by the employment of messengers who journeyed night and day, for weeks in peril and alarm.

Think of it!

Mechanism, fulfilling well-directed thought, enlarges manufactures, augments their potency, magnifies their usefulness—the implements of husbandry are so improved that manual labor is tenfold reduced, or rendered tenfold more effective—the facilities of travel are amazingly multiplied—the opportunities of all manner of intellectual culture and enjoyment are incalculably enlarged;—each step in the march of improvement demands record, and all furnish materials for instruction and for history—all are labor-saving, time-condensing;—yet the process of recording thought is no swifter than it was a hundred years ago—no less manual labor is required for him who would write a hundred words than when in none of the places of trade or manufacture—in none of the avenues of travel or inter-communication, the business of a month was so great as what is now-a-days despatched in an hour.

In view of such marked and striking contrasts, can the sternest conservative refuse to confess that man a great benefactor, who should so direct his ingenuity, that for the hand, which is the servant of the mind, he provides a system of characters—of symbols—that may be executed with a rapidity corresponding to the time-saving capacity of machine-looms and machine-lathes—of machine-made engines and machine-made presses.

For Isaac Pitman of Bath, England, the great claim of such an achievement is justly set up.

In 1837, after a course of experiments, instituted for the purpose of constructing a system of shorthand writing that could be rendered useful

as a branch of common school education, he invented Phonography. The Phonotypy I have been advocating was the outgrowth of that invention. Phonography and Phonotypy are the elements of a Spelling Reform. What Phonotypy is, I have defined. Now, let me answer—

WHAT IS PHONOGRAPHY?

It is a philosophical method of writing the English language—with an alphabet composed of simple mathematical signs—the *right line*, *segments of a circle*, and dots. These signs accurately represent elementary sounds, and when accurately combined must symbol the sound—must unmistakably indicate the pronunciation of words.

The proper use of these signs may be acquired by an adult without the aid of a teacher, and juveniles learn it in one-fifth the time required to gain a practical knowledge of common long-hand. Then he who has mastered the art of Phonographic writing, may record his thoughts or the thoughts of others six times as fast as the person who writes the ordinary system, and in one-tenth the space; and being simpler in form, and more correct in principle, Phonography is more legible than any other system of handwriting.

Every person of education has profound respect for Lindley Murray. Well, "A perfect Alphabet," says Lindley Murray in his Grammar, "would contain a number of letters precisely equal to the number of simple articulate sounds belonging to the language. Every simple sound would have its distinct character, and that character be the representative of no other sound." A perfect Alphabet for the English

language, conformed to the terms of this excellent definition, would, therefore, according to the analysis of elementary sounds, be such an alphabet as phonographers employ. Each distinct sound of the organs of speech is represented by a single motion of the hand. By practice the hand may be taught to move as rapidly as the vocal organs, and then it can record words as fast as they are spoken.

The average rate of public speaking is about one hundred and twenty words per minute. There are phonographers who can write from one hundred and eighty to two hundred and fifty words per minute. Phonography is the only system of writing by which verbatim reports of lectures, speeches, and addresses may be reliably taken. But for reporting purposes, Phonography is not alone available. In all branches of business it may be employed as a labor-saving instrument.

Probably there is not a mail traversing our own country or Great Britain, which does not convey phonographic letters of business or friendship. Secretaries use it to take down words dictated by their superiors for letters of importance. Students employ it to record words of instruction which fall from the lips of their preceptors. Lawyers prepare speeches and documents for reference, in it. Editors write it for their paper, and compositors set up type from it, and ministers preach, and lecturers discourse, from phonographic manuscripts. Business men find it of profitable advantage in recording the transactions of their establishments—for preserving a history of their affairs.

Now, if Phonography be variously advantageous to individuals—if it be labor-saving, time-

saving, paper-economizing—if it be easily acquired, legible when written, and an index to pronunciation, why may it not be adopted as the general instrument of record in literature, in science, and in business? What is the argument against its universal employment as a “writing medium?”

Everybody would have to learn something new—old systems must be thrown away. For that, everybody is not prepared, and many unwilling that others should reap advantage from what they have not the disposition, or the opportunity to acquire—perhaps, to investigate—oppose the investigation precisely in the spirit which animated Governor Berkely of Virginia, when he thanked God that there were no free schools or printing offices in that colony, and hoped there would not be for a hundred years, because, learning had brought heresy, and disobedience, and sects into the world, and printing had divulged them.

The venerable Governor manifested precisely the spirit which animates a class of people in interior Africa, who, when the missionaries go among them, form processions, and marching before the Gospel-bearers cry, “Lion, oh! Lion of the Book-men, devour them.”

How the world loses to-day, and how the world has always lost, in highest rank and importance from what may be characterized as a narrow and false conception of the greatest good to the greatest number—a blind and dogged servility among men to what each considers *his* bread-and-butter policy.

Along the highways of human progression are many costly monuments, on which we may read plain inscriptions that are at the same time

lessons and warnings.—“Ignorance,” “intolerance,” “prejudice,” “selfishness,” are the words most conspicuously engraven on their towering shafts. To those who know history, and are willing that its instructions should animate their actions, in the present, for the future, these words are luminously significant—and that significance embodies the creed of the true reformer, the good citizen; which is—be grateful to the Past—forget not the good deeds of the Heroes of the material and spiritual progress which blessed mankind before your day and generation—respect the Present—but, remember, that if you are blindly servile, either to what has been or what is, you chain the Present to the Past, and provide that the Future shall have no cause to be grateful for anything that you may accomplish.

If men and women will not secure for each other the advantages of a process of penning words, as swift, comparatively, for the writer as Railway for the traveler, why shall any one deny to children the privilege of such an acquisition? I say plumply that there can be no tenable objection to the introduction of Phonography as a branch of common school education. Its general principles are easily mastered. While acquiring the rudiments of the knowledge now imparted in the “People’s Colleges,” children may become skilful phonographers. Think you that when they have command of an art pleasant and swift, they will neglect it for one requiring long-suffering and meekness to understand, and tedious, tiresome effort as well as provoking tribulation to employ? “Young America” is intent on “fast” enterprises. Young America has not patience to wait the

prescribed period for graduation from boyhood to manhood, and if "Young America" is taught to write six times as "fast" as "old America," it will no sooner follow the caligraphic fashions of its ancestors than it will give up the rail car for the canal boat or "slow coach"—than it would let the Hoe press stand idle, from which steam strikes 20,000 sheets an hour, and take off its coat and roll up its sleeves for work at the old Ramage on which 200 were printed.

What would men or boys think of the business capacity of that merchant who because his father could only reach New-York from Cincinnati in 26 days, should refuse to avail himself of the railway on which he can ride the distance in 26 hours, Men fatigue their bodies—chafe their spirits—fret their tempers—harass their wits—cheat their neighbors and damage their reputations that they may hoard up a few dollars, or secure the deed to a few acres of land, from which they expect no personal advantage—but which they design for their children; why then may not men and women make some small sacrifice, not of money, not of time, but of opinion, or of prejudice—why may they not exercise a little liberality, that the generation which shall succeed theirs may have its opportunities for keeping accounts, for writing books, for correspondence, brought forward in a degree corresponding to the (I may almost say) all-powerful, everywhere present development for the economy of time and labor—a development, with every year reaching farther, extending higher?

For the sake of narrow prejudice or selfish motives among average dull men, or among immobiles, in high or low places, individual or corporate, shall the art which furnishes records

for the "Art preservative of all arts" be alone manacled with the precedents of the past, and left for the twentieth century as the nineteenth found it? Boldly and confidently, the friends of the Spelling Reform answer that it shall not. They are certain that in principle "they are right," and they will "*go ahead.*" Enough has been accomplished to teach them that neither sneering editors, selfish printers, trembling school-trustees, time-serving Superintendents, narrow spirited Boards of Education, learned professors, intolerant writers, nor captious preachers, though they may temporarily retard its local furtherance, can prevent the ultimate triumph of the Phonetic principle for the representation of the English language.

Economy of time is the lever of Spelling Reformers—common sense is its fulcrum, and out of the pathway of material and intellectual progress they must surely lift one of the weightiest remaining impediments to human advancement—to social elevation—a great rock over which all now stumble who would learn what has been or what is—who would record their own thoughts, or know the record of another's thought:—in short, who would be better than drones or higher than slaves.

I am neither speculative nor fanatical when I say that the success of the Spelling Reform is a question only of time. I speak the words of truth and soberness when I argue that Phonography has material advantages corresponding in a large degree to the far-reaching influence of the steam engine on trade and commerce, and therefore it is not visionary to claim that with time and money-saving strides it will, sooner or later, march over all opposition, into a thousand

avenues of business, from which it is now excluded by ignorance, indolence, and intolerance.

Whether the present confused and unsatisfactory system of representing our language shall continue to embarrass instruction, obstruct the diffusion of knowledge, and retard business twenty-five or fifty years, depends mainly upon the school teachers; and upon the mothers of America.

I need not enlarge upon the proposition that the basis of American prosperity, however considered, wherever extending, wherever operating, is Education. The man who does not recognize this fundamental fact has neither a soul for enterprize, nor a heart for national pride.

But education is not merely school instruction—it is not alone cramming of ancient lore—stuffing of venerable history—study of science and philosophy. It begins before the period at which the school law allows children to test the Job-like virtue of teachers in school rooms.

The teacher has a high and noble calling, with, indeed, proud and weighty responsibility. That American teachers know this responsibility is evidenced not alone in the intelligence of pupils, who remember them with gratitude, but also in the fact that a large number of the most influential political teachers in our state and national councils were in early life humble instructors in district schools.

Outside of and beyond spelling books, geographies, and grammars, the schoolmaster exerts an influence, which has often recognition throughout the successes and reverses of a lifetime;—but, whether this influence shall have profitable sway—whether as a mentor in morals and in business, it shall lead men and women

aright, depends mainly upon home education—home direction: therefore, appealing to the schoolmaster to act well and liberally his part, is it entirely legitimate, peculiarly appropriate, that the advocate of the Spelling Reform should appeal to mothers, with a desire that they take such an interest in the movement, as will convince them that a Reform in the construction and in the record of our language is needed—and that the Phonetic principle will answer that need. After candid consideration they will not fail to request the school teacher to instruct their children in what must save him waste of energy and patience, facilitate the pupil's acquisition four-fold, and render what he learns available for practical purposes—over the processes of his fathers in a degree corresponding to the economy of time and labor mechanical ingenuity has already secured in the management and control of steam

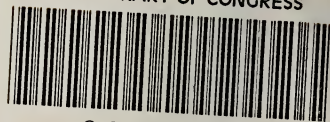
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